

Food for Fines back at the Abilene Public Library

Janis C. Test, Special to the Reporter-News 9:02 p.m. CST November 27, 2016



(Photo: david franklin)

The holidays are a wonderful, but busy time of year! So many activities abound that any way to save some time and money is truly appreciated. Your Abilene Public Library is once again giving you a "two-fer" so you can clear your library late fees and make sure someone in need eats this holiday season. Abilene Public Library's annual Food for Fines campaign celebrates our 18th year of providing food for bodies and minds.

Beginning December 1 and continuing throughout the entire month, Abilene libraries will forgive \$1.00 in late fees for each nonperishable food item donated, except for canned goods. You'll need 2 of those to count for \$1.00 forgiveness. Food collected by each Abilene Public Library location will be given to the Food Bank of West Central Texas.

Thanks to you, Food for Fines has been extraordinarily successful over the years. Since 1999 Abilene library patrons have donated many thousands of pounds of canned and boxed food to people in need. . .more than 3 thousand pounds last year alone.

The Food Bank of West Central Texas distributed 4.7 million pounds of grocery products in 2014. That food, in turn, was made into meals for people who live in poverty in our area and too often miss meals or experience hunger. The food bank serves 175 non-profit agencies in Abilene and the surrounding 13 counties.

How can you participate? Bring two cans, or one box or bag of (and this is VERY important) comparably priced, nonperishable food to the circulation desk at any Abilene Library. Each comparably priced food item, or two cans, equals \$1.00 in late fees. Rice, beans, tuna, jars of peanut butter, boxes of macaroni and cheese; as long as its food and nonperishable, it works to pay late fees. High protein items are always in need, as are healthy snacks for kids like crackers, juice boxes and pudding cups. It's a win-win situation. You benefit by having your late fees waived, while assisting local people in the fight against hunger.

Donated food items will only pay for late fees. Charges for lost or damaged books still have to be paid for in cold hard cash (checks & credit cards are also accepted).

While library staff appreciates all food donations, they can only accept commercially packaged items that are undamaged and that have not exceeded their expiration date. No dented, dinged, or previously opened food items, no government commodity items, and sorry, no home-canned items. All other nonperishable food items are welcome.

Now's the time to clean out the closet, reach under the sofa and behind the seat of the car for those long forgotten library books, audio books and DVDs. Bring them, along with your donations, to any of our library locations. You'll be making happier holidays for yourself and for someone who might otherwise go hungry.

Janis C. Test is Information Services Manager at the Abilene Public Library, 202 Cedar St.

Read or Share this story: <http://amne.ws/2gwvRF2>